



“Dear Mars”

The Mars E-mail Project©

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The Vision

This is the beginning of an
interplanetary conversation
between mankind and spacecraft.

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Proposal

- JPL Outreach identifies a school to engage in an interactive educational program focused upon the Mars '03 rover and its scientific objectives
- The school selects a single student to originate the first e-mail to a robotic entity on a foreign planet
- The student sends an inquiring e-mail and the Mars '03 rover replies with an appropriate and personal response

Benefits

- Creates an historic event, similar to the first transatlantic phone call, that will rivet public attention to the JPL mission
- Introduces the public to direct communication with a spacecraft
- Provides an exciting context for science education
- Takes the first real step towards JPL's long range vision of an interplanetary Internet



Risk Assessment

- No new technology needs to be developed
- Very light use of rover/DSN resources
- Simple, standard interface with the rover
- Secure ground communications

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Progress

- Explored engineering solutions and options with experienced JPL instrument engineers
 - John Casani
 - Don Johnson
 - Carl Ruoff
- Discussed feasibility with Richard Welch, Chief Engineer of Mars '03
- Researched COTS e-mail and intelligent synthesis packages



How we can help each other!

- Include “Dear Mars” in ‘03 Outreach Plan
- Present together to the Mars Program Office
- Collaborate to maximize the benefits to JPL and the public
- Plan together for enhanced follow-on missions

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